

. . Stanhope . .

Urban Sanitary District.



Annual Report

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health,

for the year 1906.

STANHOPE :

J. HENDERSON, AGENT PRINTER, POST OFFICE.

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1907.

To the Stanhope Urban District Council.

GENTLEMEN,

The following is my Annual Report for the year 1906.

VITAL STATISTICS.

	Estimated Population.	Birth Rate.	Death Rate.	Zymotic Rate.	Infant Mortality Rate.	Phthisis Death Rate.	Respiratory Diseases Death Rate.
1906.	1993	21·57	17·05	·50	46	1·5	·50
Averages for years 1895-1905	1971	26·04	14·18	1·5	75·3	1·9	2·2
County Rates for 1906		35·2	17·5	2·40	157·	1·09	2·62

During the year, 39 deaths were registered in the District : and of this number 17 were males and 22 females. Four died in the Workhouse belonging to the Weardale Rural District, and 2 died in the Sanatorium, while one, said to belong to the district, died in a London Nursing Home. This gives a total for the district of 34, a death rate of 17·05 per 1,000.

The following are the ages at death :—Under one year, 2 ; one and under five, 3 ; five and under fifteen, 0 ; fifteen and under twenty-five, 2 ; twenty-five and under sixty-five, 14 ; sixty-five and over, 13.

Infectious Disease caused one death from Diphtheria, a rate of ·50 per 1,000.

INFANT MORTALITY.—Under one year there were two deaths one from Intestinal Hæmorrhage and another from Premature Birth.

PHTHISIS caused three deaths—a rate of 1·5 per 1,000.

OTHER LUNG DISEASES caused one death (Pleurisy)—a rate of .50 per 1,000.

BIRTHS.—During the year there were registered the births of 19 males and 24 females, a total of 43—a birth rate of 21.57 per 1,000 compared with the previous ten years' average of 26.04 and a county rate of 35.2.

Tables I, II, III, IV, are attached.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

During the year there were notified one case of Enteric, three cases of Scarlet Fever, and 42 cases of Diphtheria.

WHOOPING COUGH.—One case was recognised in August.

DIARRHŒA was Epidemic to a slight extent during September, but no deaths were attributable to it.

INFLUENZA of a more than usually severe type was prevalent during the month of December.

TYPHOID FEVER.—The one case notified was imported in September. The case was properly isolated and every precaution taken as to the infective discharges and no more cases appeared.

DIPHTHERIA.—Twenty cases were notified in January, seven in February, 2 in April, 2 in July, 2 in September, 7 in October, and 2 in November, a total of 42, which with 40 last year, makes a total of 82 cases since the epidemic began in October, 1905. This number covers 51 centres of Infection, in only 6 of which was anything like proper isolation possible; a fact which would account for the large number of 31 sequence cases.

As previously reported (vide special reports) the spread of disease has undoubtedly been mainly through the schools; and the

closing of the schools had a most marked effect in checking the epidemic proportions of the outbreak.

As factors which, in my opinion, tend to the spread of the disease I beg to mention the following :—

(1). The mild nature of many of the cases, some of whom may have been overlooked by the parents and allowed to attend school.

(2). The excessive “beating up” of ailing school children to keep up school attendance averages.

(3). The impossibility of proper isolation in small cottages. If certain of the earlier cases had been properly isolated, the extensive spread of the disease would certainly have been prevented.

Of the 82 cases only three died, a case mortality of only 3·6. This low mortality in my opinion is undoubtedly due to the Antitoxin treatment which was applied in every case and was found most excellent in nearly all when applied early. In this connection I might suggest that a supply of antitoxin be available at the Council's expense for the benefit of people who cannot afford to pay for it. On several occasions antitoxin was used as a prophylactic among contacts where no possible means of complete isolation was possible. This was found to answer but only for a limited period.

I would beg to point out that cases remain infective for some time after all signs of the disease have gone and for that reason at least six weeks ought to elapse before an infected child be allowed to mix *freely* with other children or return to school.

I think also that some method of Medical inspection of school children would be an advantage in the presence of epidemic disease in a district.

SCARLET FEVER.—Three cases were notified in different parts of the town. One occurred in a child suffering from Diphtheria. None of the cases had anything in common, proper isolation was possible in all three and no further cases appeared.

TUBERCULAR DISEASE.—Three cases died from Tubercle of the Lungs. In every case the houses were disinfected. One child died from Tubercular Meningitis.

General Sanitation.

WATER SUPPLY is good and plentiful. The Reservoir has been restored, re-roofed, and put into perfect order. There are still many defective taps in the district.

HOUSE ACCOMMODATION.—Five new houses in Paragon Street have been occupied during the year.

PUBLIC SCAVENGING is still satisfactorily carried out except where, there being no back road, the ashpit contents have to be wheeled and deposited in the public street. This causes a nuisance for such time as it takes the cartman to remove it.

SLAUGHTER HOUSES have been inspected and everything found in good order. The meat has been found to be always of first-class quality.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS. In the aerated water factory the sanitary arrangements are satisfactory.

DAIRIES AND COWSHEDS. In November, I reported to your Council as follows :—

“Dairies and Cowsheds have been periodically inspected by myself and with your inspector in the course of house to house Inspections, when, speaking generally, the condition of Byres was found satisfactory as compared with what holds in the neighbourhood. The dairies in every case were always found to be clean and well ventilated, and the utensils in all cases

seem to be kept scrupulously clean. An abundant supply of pure water is always available.

Since the adoption of the Regulations, in cases where alterations in the buildings were necessary either as regards ventilation or lighting, flooring or drainage, steps have been taken to bring Byres up to the L.G.B. requirements as far as possible *e.g.* Byres at Horn Hall Farm, Stanhope Hall, and Newfield. But there are still several where the sanitary arrangements are indifferent.

From the very complete Report presented to your Council by your Inspector, Mr. Parker, I find that there are 23 Byres or Cowsheds in the district, and as a result of a tour of inspection with Mr. Parker, in my opinion they may be divided into three classes.

(1). Those that are satisfactory and up-to-date, if registered for the proper number of cattle (7 in number).

(2). Those that by the remedying of Insanitary conditions (usually slight) could be brought up to modern requirements (13 in number).

(3). Those that are bad and unfit for the housing of milk cows, owing to general insanitary and delapidated condition (3 in number).

The Insanitary conditions most in evidence are deficient lighting and ventilation, defective flooring, drainage and mid-den accommodation, conditions which in class ii, could be gradually remedied.

In my opinion milk sellers in the district ought to be served with a copy of the Regulations with respect to Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milkshops which were adopted by your Council in 1903, as there seems to be great ignorance as to the powers and requirements of the Sanitary Authority in the matter."

As a result of this report a copy of the Regulations was sent to each occupier and owner on the understanding that after three months, notice would be served by the Sanitary Authority to have the worst conditions remedied.

INSPECTIONS AND RESULTS. The general sanitary condition of the district has been good and only one formal notice has been served during the year. This was for a blocked drain and was attended to at once. Several verbal notices for surface nuisances have been given by your Inspector and have been quickly remedied.

SANITARY IMPROVEMENTS. Seven old ashpits have been converted into properly arranged earth closets.

Sanitary Requirements.

(1). Some means for the Isolation of cases of Diphtheria, Scarlet Fever, and Enteric Fever.

(2). A better means of access to back premises to facilitate Public Scavenging.

(3). Compulsory Notification of Phthisis.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

Jno. Gray.

March 9th, 1907.